



# Trinity of Freistadt Historical Society Notes

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*Deut: 32:7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations*

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## Rev. Grabau Arrives in Hamburg and von Rohr Leaves for America

In 1838 a number of people from the province of Silesia in Prussia went to Australia. Now in 1839 others wanted to join Rev. Grabau and go to America. They had to overcome difficulties in order to do that. Only the Gierach families and a few others ever got as far as Freistadt. Most stayed near Buffalo, NY. We continue with Iwan's story on the Old Lutherans.

To the Pomeranian emigrants – including the Berliners – and those of Saxony, we add the Silesian emigrants as well. Even though the Silesian convoy joined the others in Hamburg, and even integrated with them to a great extent, it had at first formed more or less independently – in contrast to the others, which had been under joint leadership from the beginning – and had its own set of difficulties in doing so. Of course, this group could not remain completely unknown to and independent of the other two groups. Four facts demonstrate their relationship to the other branches of the emigration of 1839. First of all, the discussions among Silesian emigrants were known to the emigrants of other provinces. That is why the emigrants of Wollin submitted a petition on October 4, 1838, stating their intention to join Pastor Krause of Breslau. At the same time, the Silesians were aware of the Saxon emigration, for Meissner, a teacher in Rothsürben near Breslau, indicated in a hearing on February 7, 1839, not only that he is joining Krause's congregation, but also that the Silesian congregation would merge with those of Erfurt and Magdeburg in Hamburg. And finally, we heard earlier that towards the end of 1838 von Rohr contacted Krause, who was already in Hamburg, to discuss the possibility of a union between their congregations for the purpose of having two pastors. We also heard about Krause's readiness to do this. Likewise, von Rohr and the other deputies planned to act in cooperation with Krause in Liverpool. At first, however, the Silesians were a distinct group, followed their own course, and, as we will see later, to a large extent remained separate.

This explains why the Silesian Lutheran emigration of 1839 was so far from reaching the record proportions of that of 1838. We can demonstrate how justified this

reason was with a case in point. In March of 1839 an application for permission to emigrate was submitted for 27 individuals from Schabenau in the district of Guhrau. They wanted to emigrate because they lacked spiritual care and named Krause as their pastor. On April 4, the Landrat reports that they withdrew their application. This was certainly a victory for the church leadership in Breslau. A letter from one of Kellner's "flying" trips, cited on page 202 of "Kellners Leben" ("Kellner's Life"), reads, "On March 22, 1839, I continued on to Lüben. On the way, Hoffmann, a Lutheran and non-commissioned officer in the 6th regiment, mounted his horse and went to Schabenau to deter twenty people from emigrating."

We already saw for 1836 how strong the inclination to emigrate was in Silesia. But when we compare the signatures of Helling's petition from that year with the names of the emigrants in 1838 and 1839, we can conclude that many in Silesia, specifically from the region of Breslau, abandoned their plan. Still, many of the petitioners from the city of Breslau retained their desire to emigrate from 1836 and finally followed through in 1839. The first Silesian emigrants of 1835 were from the region of Breslau, those of 1838 came from the region of Liegnitz. The main contingent from Breslau emigrated in 1839. They numbered 196, while 69 came from Liegnitz. We list the names in the table in the appendix. The number of emigrants from each district was as follows:

Breslau .....	56	Oels.....	59
Trebnitz .....	64	Wartenberg.....	17
Glogau .....	25	Liegnitz .....	17
Goldberg .....	8	Rothenburg.....	1
Grünberg.....	27	Sagan.....	3
Sprottau.....	1	Freistadt.....	5

To be accurate, we must note that some differences exist in the plentiful government lists for Trebnitz and Breslau. We have indicated those persons whose emigration status is uncertain by placing their names in brackets in the appendix. We can definitely state that all the emigrants of 1839 went to America. Despite the fact that a number of them, especially from Trebnitz and Grünberg, named Australia as their destination, these people also admit that the destination will first be determined in Hamburg. And because they name Grabau and Krause as their accompanying pastors at the same time, their actual destination must be the same since no Lutherans emigrated without a member of the clergy. This corrects some statements made in "Um des Glaubens willen nach Australien." It is further corroborated by statements made by a man from Schloin in the district of Grünberg named Schmidt in a hearing on June 29. He claimed that he had just returned to Grünberg from Hamburg, where he had made preparations for traveling with the others and had personally been assured by Grabau that he would accompany them. We consider these statements reliable even though the governor of Silesia told the minister on January 20, 1841, that some (not all) people from Trebnitz, Glogau, Grünberg and Sagan had emigrated to Australia. The governor's statement remains puzzling and can only be explained by the fact that he relied more on the destination indicated on the permits than on that which was finally decided upon in Hamburg.

Among the emigrants of 1839 from Glogau, there were three brothers named Zeihn. An account of the journey of Fritzsche's emigrants of 1841, written by a man named Müller, list a brother of Zein as having died during the trip. However, the difference in the year and spelling, as well as the origin of the latter Zein from Posen, prove that this von Zein of 1841 had nothing to do with the Zeihns of 1839. We feel it is significant, if not conclusive, that we know nothing of

the emigration of any other Lutherans to Australia in 1839. That the people of Breslau named Michigan as their destination is no more significant than when some permits indicate Illinois or Buffalo. America is meant in all of these cases.

The applications were processed in the usual manner: legal documentation was required and, finally, the emigrants were duly informed on being issued the permits. At the same time, the prescribed royal orders and the Roscoe letter were read and warnings given. The Landrat Zedlitz did this especially extensively and insistently for the residents of Wartenberg. He reminded them how disorderly and unsafe conditions were in America, with Indian attacks and the intolerance of the Christians there. But the petitioners refuted these arguments point by point and emphasized that they could never come to terms with the evangelical state church and the agenda. They even called the agenda ludicrous, especially because of the liberties granted on the use of different liturgical formulations. We will let this one statement suffice to demonstrate the religious nature of the Silesian emigrants. This could easily be substantiated even more with many other statements from the interrogations.

The proof of sufficient money for the journey, which the Landräte and the government demanded, caused particularly long delays. This complication was not eliminated until the government received instructions from above to abstract from proof of a specific sum and to let the assurance suffice that they will be able to come up with the necessary means. The emigrants showed an especially good example of their solidarity on the question of money. They declared at the interrogations that they would support each other, abandon no one and take along even the poor who had fought together with them.

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## Recent Tours and Events

May 25 .....About 80 students from Wilson School in Mequon toured our museum.

May 28 .....Students from our school had a "One Room School" day at our museum.

July 4 .....Our buildings and exhibits were on display and two people from Old Wisconsin joined us and displayed weaving.

July 6 .....Outdoor movie night at the picnic shelter.

July 14 .....Members of the Suelflow family and their friends from Oxford, WI toured our museum.

August 2 .....Members of the Schoessow family and friends toured the museum.

August 19 .....Mr. and Mrs. David Hummel from Texas toured the museum.

*Psalm 105: "Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known among the nations what He has done."*

*Editor: LeRoy Boehlke*